

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 205087
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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR EG IS XF

SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF EGYPTIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

1. THE PRESIDENT HAS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF EGYPT BEFORE THE CAMP DAVID MEETINGS. I THINK YOU ARE BEST PLACED TO DO THIS, ALTHOUGH I HESITATE TO PUT ANY MORE WORK ON THE MISSION. THIS IS CLEARLY OF HIGHEST PRIORITY.

2. YOU MIGHT WANT TO THINK OF THIS JOB IN TERMS OF A COUPLE OF MESSAGES RATHER THAN PRODUCING ONE LONG ONE. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO START WITH A BASIC PRIMER ON THE EGYPTIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM: WHAT DOES POWER CONSIST OF? TO WHOM MUST SADAT PAY ATTENTION? WHO ARE THE KEY PEOPLE AND WHERE ARE THE MAIN CENTERS OF POWER?

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WHAT HAS CAUSED THE SYSTEM TO EVOLVE AS IT HAS FIRST UNDER NASSER AND THEN SINCE HIS DEATH? ONCE HAVING SET THE STAGE IN A MESSAGE OF THAT KIND, THEN YOU MIGHT WANT TO SEND IN AN APPRAISAL OF THE CURRENT SITUATION: WHAT HAS LED SADAT TO THE PRESENT EFFORTS TO REFORM THE EGYPTIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM? WHAT IS SADAT TRYING TO ACHIEVE? WHAT ARE THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT HIS ABILITY TO STAY IN OFFICE? HOW IMPORTANT IS THE

ECONOMIC SITUATION? HOW MUCH OF A FACTOR IN HIS DOMESTIC STRENGTH IS THE FATE OF HIS PEACE INITIATIVE?

3. I DON'T MEAN THESE QUESTIONS TO BE RESTRICTIVE, ONLY SUGGESTIVE. I THINK YOU WILL SEE WHAT WE ARE DRIVING AT. THE PRESIDENT, AS THE SECRETARY SAID, WANTS TO DEAL WITH BEGIN AND SADAT AS POLITICAL LEADERS. HE FEELS HE UNDERSTANDS THE ISRAELI POLITICAL SYSTEM TO SOME DEGREE, BUT, LIKE MANY HERE, HE DOES NOT FEEL HE HAS A VERY GOOD PICTURE OF HOW THE EGYPTIAN SYSTEM WORKS.

4. I THINK YOU HAVE A LITTLE TIME TO WORK ON THIS. I BELIEVE IF WE HAD BOTH OF THESE MESSAGES BY AUGUST 28 OR 29 THAT WOULD BE TIME ENOUGH.

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